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IN THE ART WORLD OF NEW YORK

By KATE KERBY

A GAIN the Art Season in this city has dawned bright and promising, and full of nervous activity. The patrons are hurrying home with exultant and startling accounts of how such and such a treasure was acquired, or disappointedly searching through the dealers' galleries in the hope that these more diplomatic ones have secured the prize they coveted and it may still be theirs. It is not now always possible for our American "pirates" with their golden weapons to unlock each bolt and bar securing the old world treasures, or dim the sight of guards defending impregnable fortresses. There are other rivals in the field on whom has dawned the fact of the rich and rare harvests of priceless objects of art being each year gathered into our American homes. Germany with her growing wealth and undoubted knowledge of art values, looms up formidably, and has brought new buyers into the field.

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THE KNOEDLER GALLERIES, originally the Goupil, which was established in 1846, is one of the treasure vaults of art in New York City. Mr. Knoedler, who has recently returned from abroad, thinks the outlook for the season brighter than for some time and says that the best pictures, though very high, sell most readily. Two of the treasures secured by him this summer were Turner's famous "Westlake Terrace," which cost £13,230, and Constable's "Salisbury Cathedral." The former shows a view looking down the Rhine from the garden of a house which occupies the left of the picture. There are trees on the terrace to the right, and one very large one in front; a very beautiful composition. The "Salisbury Cathedral," tall, white and imposing, is seen in the background of a serene bit of landscape, with a pool and some cattle peacefully drinking in front, and trees—Constable's very own trees, for no one has treated them quite as this artist has. This brought £8,190. These rare works of art are never seen by the general public, neither at this gallery, nor at any of the other prominent galleries visited, but are reserved for regular customers or known patrons, and the critics. One very beautiful composition was to be seen, however, the large window by Miss Tillinghast, one of our well known New York artists. Miss Tillinghast has done many fine things, but none better

than this. The subject is the "Signing of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes," and shows the king at the moment after the signing holding in one hand the document, at arm's length, to which he points with his sword, signifying that it shall be held inviolate, even at the point of the sword. Eight figures are used in this three-panel composition, without any appearance of crowding. The king, in a rich cream colored costume, occupies the center, a striking figure; a soldier kneels in front, waiting for the paper. To the right in the foreground stands the new queen—Mme. de Maintenon—and through the windows in the background are seen the green hills and trees of Fontainebleau, whither the royal party has come for a short wedding journey. The costumes and all the accessories, the coat of arms of the Louis of France, of the Huguenots, and all the minor details are historically correct, as the artist made studies at the famous museums abroad this summer. So it is quite fitting that the window is to adorn "The Historical Society Building" here, a gift from Mrs. Russell Sage, in memory and in honor of her own Huguenot ancestry, herself a worthy representative. The artist is also a descendant of an old Huguenot family.

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AT THE BLAKESLEE GALLERIES unusual activity prevails. The specialty here is the school of Early English masters. Among the famous examples picked up this summer is that beautiful "Simplicity"—one of the happiest of Sir Joshua Reynolds' child subjects—also his "Tenth Earl of Huntingdon," a remarkably strong and graceful piece of work. But the most remarkable acquisition of the season is Rosetti's magnificent "Mnemosyne, the Lamp of Memory," of which the *Herald of October* eighteenth says: "Several circumstances combine to contribute to its fame. It shows a beautiful draped female figure and is richly colored, so that through its beauty alone it at once arrests attention. Moreover, it was sold by the artist to Frederick Leyland, who hung it in the famous peacock room which Whistler had decorated for him, and it is still in the frame, curiously decorated with rosettes, which Rosetti himself designed for the picture, and the raised words "Thou fill'st from the winged chalice of the Soul, Thy lamp, O Memory, fire-winged to its goal." Mr. Blakeslee drew a graphic pic-

AMONG THE NEW YORK ART GALLERIES

ture of the sensitiveness of the English gentle or noble people, about parting with treasured objects of art, which financial distress rendered necessary. "Only by the greatest delicacy and diplomacy, and by promising not to have it known in England from whom I obtained them, can I secure these fine old pictures. There is a feeling of awe and reverence for these old heirlooms which is most appealing. I have gone among the people so much and am so well known now, that I have less trouble in acquiring these paintings for the American public, but nothing would persuade them to part with them to English dealers." Mr. Blakeslee quotes prices of pictures sold at auction in London this summer at three times the price they brought a few years ago, and tells of a "Corot" which he sold in 1886, when he was handling pictures of the Barbizon School, for \$20,000, which sold last year for \$70,000.

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AT THE BRANDUS GALLERIES, on Fifth avenue, a most interesting and unique exhibition is in progress. "The First New York Salon of Original Etchings in Colors," the works being by most celebrated Engravers of the Modern French School, such as Helleu, Charbanian, Charpentier, Houdard, Eugene Dauphin, Bompard, Pierre Labrousse, Luigini, Frits Thaulow, Veber and others. Original etchings in colors are the outcome of a renewed Art Industry, which two centuries ago was flourishing in France and England, but remained lost to the world for the following two hundred years. It was in November, 1904, that the first Annual Salon of Colored Etchings was opened in the Georges Petit Galleries, in Paris, and was highly successful; the Luxembourg Museum in Paris and other prominent art galleries of Europe made large purchases in 1904, 1905, 1906 and last year. An etching in colors is an original work of art by an artist who engraves it himself on special plates. As a rule he does also the coloring and printing himself for every copy. No photographic process and no mechanical work comes into operation, and the number of copies taken is very limited, and each copy is signed by the artist.

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THE LOUIS RALSTON GALLERIES have on exhibition some very fine examples of ancient and modern paintings, and though early for predictions, Mr. Ralston has hopes of a renewal of activity in the realms of Art this season, which has been comparatively quiet for the past two years. And indeed, this was borne out here as at all the other galleries visited. Mr. Ralston says he finds every

season more difficulty in securing fine original examples. One beautiful portrait he has is that of Lady Digby, by Cornelius Janssen, a canvas measuring 40x50 inches. This is an exquisite thing which he acquired from an old family in Glasgow.

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AT THE CLAUSEN GALLERIES we found preparations being made for the first exhibition of the season. This is to be a collection of the pictures of the American artist, Mr. Edward Gay, a member of the National Academy, and one of our very interesting landscape painters. Mr. Gay has been painting since some time in the fifties, as we find his first work of importance was exhibited in 1861.

It was at this gallery last spring that the remarkable pictures by Malcolm Fraser were seen, and which called forth such an amount of criticism, favorable and otherwise; but which had a tremendous sale simply because they sounded a new note. The technique was often faulty, but back of each work was an idea, something that made the beholder stop and think. They were called "vision pictures," the artist having painted without models, or at least with models only visible to him. He is to hold another exhibition this season.

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BRAUN CLEMENT & Co., carrying over 100,000 negatives of prominent pictures! Here one may study the galleries of the world in reproduction in these remarkably fine copies. The negatives of the larger and more famous pictures are very large, the less important about half the size, and all systematically arranged in great folios which line the walls of the galleries. In a moment one can be transported from Paris to London, Belgium or Amsterdam, and thus side by side study the greatest painters and sculptors the world has ever known. Often some work of art will suggest something by another of the great masters, but perhaps only one example may be found in the Louvre, another in London, still more in Amsterdam or Brussels, while here all the works of each artist we are interested in, may be studied by comparison in every detail, but the color.

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MR. LOUIS K. EHRLICH, who handles the "Old Masters" exclusively, says "There is a growing scarcity of fine old masters, and that the prices are advancing by leaps and bounds. Not only are the American millionaires lavish patrons of Antique Paintings, but the growing wealth of Germany has brought new buyers into the field. There is no greater proof of the advance in the values of Old

ARTISTIC KERAMICS

Masters than the recent purchase by the National Gallery of London of a painting by Franz Hals for \$125,000! This portrait group shows a study, in the open, of a family of eight or ten persons—several adults, with some happy children and a nurse playing under the trees. It is quite safe to say this work would not have brought one-fifth of this sum fifteen years ago." Mr. Ehrich visited England, Belgium, Germany and France, and reports having had unusual good luck in finding and securing some superb Old Masters.

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THE SCHAUSS GALLERIES, among the oldest in New York, were originally located away down town, in Chambers Street. This was about 1850; great changes have taken place since then. For many years now the galleries have occupied a very prominent location in the art section of Fifth avenue. The specialty here is the "1830" School, and The Modern Dutch Artists. When asked for his opinion of the outlook for the present season in Art, Mr. Schauss said: "I look for a good season, and am well prepared for it. I have some magnificent things, not unpacked yet; some still at the Custom House. Yes,

the prices are higher, look at that small picture of Johannes Vermeer recently bought by the great Amsterdam Gallery for \$250,000!" Plummer, Israels, Weisenbruch, J. and William Maris, etc., seem favorites with Mr. Schauss, but a fine Schreyer and a small, but excellent example of Zeim, occupied prominent places in the inner gallery, and indeed a wealth of good things adorned the walls, suggesting the height of a successful season.

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MR. JULIUS OEHME, whose fifty years' experience in handling the works of the Barbizon School and Modern Dutch artists, renders his opinion of the highest importance, also reports the growing scarcity of genuine works of art and consequently higher prices. "Art is subject to fashion," said Mr. Oehme, "taste changes in this as in other things, some seasons one School of Art is popular, and perhaps the next, another, but where patrons desire genuine originals of the best masters they are willing to pay for them." Mr. Oehme sounds a note of encouragement to our own American artists in saying that our work is in greater demand, and values advancing proportionately.

ARTISTIC KERAMICS

An exhibition of unusual merit is being held in the Fine Arts Building by the resident artist colony, which has assembled examples of the studios where handcraft and the artist have combined to make beautiful and useful objects. Among them is Mrs. Ione Wheeler, Ceramic artist, whose lovely work attracts through its simplicity of design and originality, color and individuality. Her designs are bold, effective and charming for the numerous objects displayed which consist of sets for lemonade, beautiful pieces for the cabinet and table service. In the luster work, Mrs. Wheeler makes her own colors and produces exquisite tones for the delicate cabinet pieces. Many lovely art objects are on display for the gift seasons which this gentle artist has decorated with an individuality and beauty unsurpassed. Keramics are acknowledged as one of the fine arts by many connoisseurs which is exemplified in Mrs. Wheeler's studio on the tenth floor of Fine Arts Building. She has been the recipient of prizes for design and color, and ex-

hibits annually at the Art Institute with Ceramic Society of Chicago and National League of Mineral Painters. The conventional work by Mrs. Wheeler has a distinct charm which is most happily worked out in excellent effects from simple motives adapted to the vase, bowl, or plate, or other object as the case may be. The decoration depends upon the form, or period it may represent which is done simply to emphasize its beauty. Hence, subdued effects, simple coloring add to its effectiveness as an artistic object. Versatility must be conceded to the Ceramic worker who produces the balance of line, the geometric suggested design and the harmony of all. Ornament or decoration varies as a standard in the public eye, and as this standard varies the artist establishes through her work the highest standard which reveals her own individuality and knowledge of harmony, correct color and proposition, hence, she must be efficient to produce what the poets of old did in the beginning, truth to nature, simplicity and beauty.